

House Republicans' Real Agenda Revealed

A Look at What House Republicans Would Have to Do to Implement their Budget

This week, Republicans are negotiating an unworkable budget agreement that disinvests in our nation's long-term economic growth and makes it harder for working Americans to get ahead. Since House Republicans took over the majority in 2011, they have put forward the same unrealistic budget that includes extreme policy changes to programs important to working families across the country. Yet, they have failed to enact any of the changes that would be necessary to implement their draconian policies.

If House Republicans were serious about wanting to implement their budget – instead of paying lip service to extreme Members of their party – they would need to add to their spring agenda legislation that would:

- **Eliminate the Medicare guarantee** and replace it with a voucher program that would raise health care costs for seniors
- **Turn Medicaid into a capped block grant**, cutting it by one-third (\$913 billion), while also repealing the Affordable Care Act Medicaid expansion
- **Take away health care coverage from more than 16 million previously uninsured Americans** who now have coverage through the Affordable Care Act
- **Cut \$89 billion in Pell grants** that Congress already enacted and paid for, making college less affordable for students and their families
- **Cut \$125 billion in nutrition assistance over ten years**, harming children, elderly, disabled, and low income families
- **Allow vital improvements to the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) and the Child Tax Credit to expire**
- **Eliminate the Manufacturing Extension Partnerships, which serve 30,000 small manufacturers** that contribute to the creation of well-paying jobs and economic growth
- **Cut pay for federal employees by 6% by raising their retirement contributions by \$127 billion over 10 years**

While House Republicans have attempted to pursue the appropriations process at sequester funding levels in past years, they have been forced to abandon the process when it becomes clear they can't fund the priorities of the American people under the draconian levels required by the sequester:

- **FY2015:** House passed eight appropriations bills; only one (DHS) was enacted through regular order – but only after a near-shutdown; eleven were included in the Omnibus
- **FY2014:** House passed four appropriations bills; none were enacted through regular order; twelve were included in the Omnibus.
- **FY2013:** House passed seven appropriations bills; none were enacted through regular order; twelve were included in the Omnibus.
- **FY2012:** House passed six appropriations bills; none were enacted through regular order; twelve were included in two separate Omnibuses.

Appropriations Committee Chairman Hal Rogers called the sequester “unrealistic and ill-conceived.” In this year's budget, Republicans are funding non-defense appropriations at the unworkable sequester level, while doubling down on it by cutting an additional \$759 billion from domestic priorities in future years, such as:

- NIH research
- K-12 education
- Energy technologies
- Advanced manufacturing
- Public safety

If the past four years are any indication of what's to come, it will soon become clear that these policy changes and spending caps that Republicans will have to pass are unworkable, unrealistic, and unpopular, and that there needs to be an agreement to replace sequester level spending. Many of their Members have already recognized this:

House Appropriations Chairman Hal Rogers (R-KY): ““The defense hawks are unhappy; nondefense supporters are not happy with the numbers — so I think the pressure is going to build at some point in time to try to do something’ about the 2011 spending caps.” [Politico, [4/20/15](#)]

Rep. Rob Woodall (R-GA): “I can’t imagine the year ending without a Ryan-Murray agreement.” [Politico, [4/20/15](#)]

Rep. Tom Cole (R-OK): “I find it hard to believe we’ll get what we want in defense without doing something domestically, what the Democrats would want... Clearly, the two sides are going to have to sit down at some point and have a discussion. ... There’s potential for a larger budget deal later.” [Politico, [4/20/15](#)]

It's clear that House Republicans should work with Democrats to put our nation on a fiscally responsible path while investing in our nation's future.